A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Tueſday, March 29. 1709.

I Made an Eſſay in my laſt on this Subject, at the Terms of a Peace; and ſince the Eyes of all *Europe* ſeem to be more particularly bent that way at this Time than uſually, I think it may not be amiſs to go on with it here, whether it goes on abroad or not.

The *French*, we are told, have made Overtures of Peace; whether they are ſuch as the Confederates think a ſufficient Ground of a Treaty, does not yet appear, it rather looks as if they were not——

And if not, then either the *French* Affairs are very ill repreſented to us, or the *French* muſt be infatuated to a ſtrange Degree.

If what we have ſeen, and what we have heard be true; nay, I may ſay, if half what we have heard be true, the *French* are diſtracted, that they do not offer what we could not in Reaſon refuſe; if they have ſuffer'd their Soldiers to ſtarve, and their Officers to be naked and miſerable this ſevere Winter; if they have ſuffer'd Mutinies and Tumults in their Garriſons, for Want of paying the Troops; if they are fain to borrow Money of the Frontier Towns to keep the Soldiers to their Duty; if on their Muſters, their Captains are aſham'd to be ſeen at the Head of their Company, and 15 to 24 Men are the Number of the Foot to a Company; if the Horſe are diſmounted, and the Peaſants of the *Pais Conquis* furniſh Horſes inſtead of Taxes, to mount the Dragoons; if their Recruits are raw, ſtarv'd, and half-grown Youths; if their Bankers are broke, and the publick Bills at 50 to 60 *l. per Cent.*

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Diſcount; if their Councils are divided, and their Generals at Variance one with another——— In ſhort, if they are in a general Want of both Men and Money, and the Men they have will not fight——On the contrary, if our Army is larger, and in better Condition than ever, our Augmentations ready and made up of old Troops, and all our Auxilliaries drawing together— *If theſe Things are ſo*, and really there ſeems to be a Face of Truth upon every Part of it, tho' perhaps common Fame according to common Practice may enlarge Things in Degree——What Spirit of Infatuation poſſeſſes the *French* Court, that they do not yield to an Honourable Peace, that they do not offer what they know we will accept; for they know well enough what the Confederates will be content with, and what they will not be content without.

I know it may be objected, that the *French*, not making ſuch Offers as they know the Confederates cannot make Peace without, is a Token they are not in ſo ill a Condition as we ſuggeſt—And if the *French* had not more than once been infatuated in this War, this might be true——— What they flatter themſelves with, I know not; but if their Men behave no better this Year than they did laſt, of which I ſee very little Probability—. I ſee nothing can hinder the Confederate Army from ruining their Affairs in one Campaign more——— And if we enter *France* in full March, they muſt fight us in the Field, or come upon their Knees, and beg what Peace we pleaſe to beſtow.

From theſe Reaſons, I cannot but note, that I think, all the vaſt Preparations of the *French*, and the good Face they put upon their Affairs in *Flanders*, is only an Outſide, and that they will offer you a compleat Peace, when they come to the Point——— I ſee but one thing they have for it, beſides this Offer, that can relieve them, and that is, ſome very briſk Attempt in the firſt of the Campaign on the Side of *Alſace* ——— Had they a puſhing General on that ſide, and but 35000 Men to take the Field by the Middle of *April*, they might indeed penetrate far into the Empire, and perhaps keep back the Troops of *Heſſe*, *Saxony*, *Wirtembergh*, &c. But this, tho' it would raiſe their Spirits a little, would not retrieve their Affairs; *Liſle* is too near *Paris* to let them be eaſie; if they are heartily puſh'd at home, all their remoter Succeſſes muſt fall and come to nothing.

And what is the Peace we will accept now if they offer it? ——— For this is the main Queſtion——The whole *Spaniſh* Monarchy, ſays the Parliament, or if I may put it into Words, the Treaty of the *Pyrenees*——— When the Treaty of *Nimeguen* was begun, it held a long Debate, whether it ſhould be founded on the Treaty of the *Pyrenees*, or of *Aix la Chapelle*———And the *French* once offer'd the Firſt, with the Exception of *Burgundy* and *Franche Comte*. But ſome time after Succeſſes rais'd them to refuſe that Offer, and at laſt they had all the *Pais Conquis* conceded to them, as may be ſeen by that Treaty—Which tho' call'd the Treaty of *Nimeguen* abroad, was in Burleſque call'd the *Petticoat-Peace*, as being clap'd up in *Portſmouth*'s Cloſet, if *Andrew Marvel* is to be believ'd, and Sir *William Temple* almoſt acknowledg'd it.

I think, if ever the Confederates had an Opportunity to retrieve all the diſadvantagious Treaties of thoſe Times, to unravel all the Court Frauds, which by *French* Money, *French* Whores, and *French* Councils were tranſacted here in thoſe Times; by which all the Princes of *Europe* were aw'd and manag'd, and which indeed help'd to raiſe the *French* Greatneſs to the Pitch it has ſince been at, IT IS NOW: All the Chicanry of that *Petticoat-Peace*, all the *French* Shams of Devolution-Right, by which he ſeiz'd *Burgundy*, *Franche Comte*, and *Luxemburgh*, after he had by Oath relinquiſh'd all Manner of Claim to the Succeſſion of any Part of *Spain*, at his Marriage; in ſhort, all the Advantages of all Treaties, wherein he has been often too hard for us, and all the Advantages of that Series of 40 Years Succeſſes, may be now unravell'd and retriev'd— And therefore if the *French* are not beaten into a Temper to ſubmit to ſuch a Peace as *Europe* wants, we muſt fight 'em on till they are—And we muſt have ſome Diſappointment this Summer, which no Body expects, if one Campaign more does not bring them to it.

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I laid down a Scheme of Preliminaries, upon which, I think, we ought to have a Peace, and which if the *French* would comply with, I doubt not a Peace would be ſoon made up——— I did ſay, rather than not treat at all, and rather than more Blood and Money ſhould be expended, I ſhould plead for ſome Abatements —But pray, Gentlemen, do not miſtake the Word; I am for abating nothing of the *Spaniſh Monarchy*— What I ſhall enter upon, amounts to only ſtating the Term, the *Spaniſh Monarchy*, that we may underſtand one another when we ſpeak of it; whether it ſhall be underſtood of the *Spaniſh Monarchy*, as it was at the Beginning of this War, or as it was at the Treaty of the *Pyrenees*, for I think the Word is left indefinite, as we now talk of it, and even in the Parliament's Addreſs.

If the firſt of theſe be underſtood, I confeſs, I am not ſo fond of the Peace, as I am the Way I propoſe it. If you will underſtand the latter of them, and *France* yielded the main Article, I would abate any remote reaſonable Thing, rather than not make a Peace, ſince the Monarchy of *Spain*, ſo reſtor'd, would reſtore *Burgundy*, *Franche Compte*, and the Provinces of *Artois*, *Hainault*, and *French Flanders* commonly call'd *les Pays Conquis*; and it is ſo abſolutely neceſſary to have theſe, that I think no ſafe Peace can be made without them—— The Peace muſt be ſo eſtabliſh'd, as that we may leave no Room for another War. We have gone thro' this, far beyond what our Enemy, or indeed we our ſelves, ever thought us able to do——— But we ſhall not leave our Poſterity ſo able to embark in another War, as we were when we began this—Therefore this Peace muſt be Safe as well as Honourable; indeed if it is not Safe, it is not Honourable.

It ſeems to me therefore abſolutely neceſſary, that the *French* be effectually unharbour'd in *Flanders*, he ſhould not have one Inch of Ground to ſet his Tyrannical Feet on in the *Spaniſh Netherlands*——— And if there is any Difficulty to *beat* him out, or to *treat* him out, yet it muſt be done one way or other; for while he has Poſſeſſion of ſo many Strengths there, he will be always a Terror to the Confederates, and will always have Power enough left to attack the weak *ill-manag'd Spaniards*—— But if theſe Places are reſtor'd, his Talons will be clip'd, his Nails par'd, and his Neighbours ſafe.

This makes the Parliament's Addreſs to the QUEEN for the demoliſhing the Fortifications of *Dunkirk*, very juſt, for Towns of ſuch Strength are unſufferable Yoaks upon the Necks of Neighbours, and this War muſt leave no ſuch Advantages in the Enemy's Hand———

We are to conſider, that when the War is over with us, we always diſarm and diſband, we have no Tyrants, and conſequently keep up no Face of Tyranny, no Terror of Subjects, and Bridles to Liberty—— The *French* Government is quite *another thing*; he reigns by what ſome call Divine Right, *Anglice*, the *Sword*, and he will always have his Armies ready; and therefore it is abſolutely neceſſary, not only to take theſe Towns out of his Hands, but to have them in the Hands of our Friends. Then let the King of *France* keep 200000 Men in Pay, if he pleaſes.

I think, this Reaſon for diveſting *France* of the whole *Pays Conquis*, is unanſwerable; for a Barrier of that Strength is a ſufficient Security, and leſs than that would not be a ſufficient Security to the *Engliſh* and *Dutch*. Then you have the *French* at a due Diſtance, and we can never be ſurpriz'd by them; *Flanders* will be a Wall of Braſs, which he can never break through, till the *Engliſh* and *Dutch* may have ſufficient Time to arm for their Defence—— *Naples* and *Scicily* are Trifles to theſe——— And therefore I ſtill ſay, the Word *Spaniſh Monarchy* muſt be explain'd to mean as it was at the *Pyrenean* Treaty, or elſe you muſt have the *Low Countries*, with *Burgundy* and the *Franche Compte* out of the Hands of the *French*, whatever Equivalent you yield for them— And this is what I mean by Abatements, which I hope, no Body can object againſt.

Some People are very buſie to fright us again with a Notion of the *French* arming for a new Invaſion, and I was once a going to mention ſomething of it in theſe Papers; but when I lately ſaw an Account of the Forwardneſs our Fleet was in, and that we

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